

Self-Regulation vs. Self-Control: a Five Minute Primer

This brief video clip, titled *Self-Regulation: Sources of Stress in Young Children*, can be found at <http://bit.ly/1DzdR57>. It provides a good snapshot of the five domain self-regulation framework as Dr. Stuart Shanker highlights key differences between *self-regulation* and *self-control*. Often, we make flawed assumptions about youngsters (or any of us) exhibiting dysregulated behaviour, mistakenly thinking that it occurs due to “lack of effort...lack of willpower...” The time has come to reframe our thinking and move away from believing that people choose an unproductive/dysregulated pathway in their interactions.

Rather, let's understand that self-regulation is achieved, maintained or restored when a person expends energy dealing with stressors and is able to quickly replenish energy levels to return to a functional and productive set point. That individual is far more ready to cope with the next set of stressors than the person whose energy isn't restored before new challenges arrive. It isn't about willpower or choice.

The good news is that there is plenty we can do to change outcomes. That's the self-regulation story.